



Showing the Way

An Introduction to Creating
a Successful Community
Wayfinding Plan

Prepared by Cygnet Strategies
and Mayfield Creative



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Wayfinding and Why it Matters to Your Community

Wayfinding is the art and science of moving people through an environment to a desired destination using a variety of visual cues like:

- Directional signage
- Place identification
- Streetscaping
- Visual landmarks
- Other forms of environmental graphics

First coined in the 1960s, the word “wayfinding” has become an integral part of urban planning and placemaking. Wayfinding improves circulation and directs visitor dollars where they have the most impact. Retail environments thrive when visitors can easily find their way. Districts become popular destinations when a brand-supportive wayfinding system illuminates a clearly marked path for patrons.

Integration of smart problem solving with outstanding visuals results in successful programs that decrease traffic congestion and strengthen downtown economic growth and development while enhancing the success of cultural venues and experiences, retail and restaurants.

Wayfinding helps visitors and residents find:

- Parking
- Business districts
- Historic districts
- Entertainment districts
- Cultural attractions
- Activities
- Retail
- Restaurants
- Lodging
- Visitor information
- Parks and outdoor recreation areas
- Public transportation
- Government services

With the proper combination of planning, design and branding, a wayfinding system can be as beautiful as it is functional. It will enhance an area’s character and sense of place for visitors and the local community.

The Process – What is Involved?

A. Funding

Ideas about funding resources for wayfinding systems can be found at http://www.cygnetstrategies.com/wayfinding_funding_sources

B. Selecting a Contractor

Most people are familiar with the Request for Proposal (RFP) process. It is the method of choice for many public entities and is an excellent option for tangible goods and construction projects. However, when it comes to contracting for professional services, an RFP can be a disadvantage since its primary focus is price.

In today's competitive economy, many communities are finding that bidders will submit attractive bid packages with prices that are significantly lower than those of other bidders. The contract is awarded and work begins. But it doesn't take long for project creep to begin. Additional work that was left out of the bid (to reduce the price) is now necessary for a quality project. As a community, you find yourself in a no-win position – settle for a mediocre or inadequate project or increase your budget.

This type of situation can be avoided by using a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process. When you're contracting for professional services, you want to get the best person you can afford. By using an RFQ, you compare the bidders based upon their skills and experience. You select the company best suited for the project and then negotiate a scope of work that fits within your budget. If you can't come to an acceptable agreement, you move on to the next best match.

Using an RFQ gives you more control over the project costs and facilitates clear communication about expectations and the specifics of the project.

Information you're looking for in an RFQ:

- How long have they been designing **city** wayfinding systems?
- What similar projects have they completed?
- Have they worked in a community like yours before?
- What are the qualifications of the individual team members?
- What kind of public process experience do they have?
- What is their method for bringing about public consensus?
- Have they successfully worked with a variety of governmental and regulatory agencies?
- What do former clients say about them?

The Process – What is Involved?

- Who will be doing the work?
- Will they involve you in the collaboration process and how will they go about it?
- Do they charge a flat fee or hourly rate?
- Are expenses, including travel, included?
- What is the payment schedule?
- Are they fully bonded?
- How much of the work will be done in house and how much will be sub contracted?

C. Planning and Design Process

Consider using this five-step wayfinding plan process that we developed based upon a combination of architectural standards, Society of Environmental Graphic Design (SEGD) standard practices and our own proven methodology.

Step I: Research and Planning

Before anything else, it's time for some homework:

- become familiar with the community's history, culture and industries
- identify key stakeholders for interviews
- collect all available marketing collateral
- study previous development plans.
- conduct a conditions assessment
- create a photographic inventory

Then an on-site visit to view and document:

- definable destinations
- traffic decision points
- traffic speed and flow
- sight lines
- density of visual competition
- environmental conditions
- existing wayfinding vernacular

This research and documentation is submitted to the community and serves as the foundation for further development.

The Process – What is Involved?

Step II: Concept Generation

With an understanding of what currently exists and where the needs and challenges are, rough concepts and a preliminary wayfinding strategy are created and submitted for review, comment and/or approval. This strategy includes information about ingress and egress routes, area destinations and diversions, district locations, traffic patterns and proposed rerouting.

Step III: Design Development

After receiving comments and/or approvals from the community representative the rough concepts are narrowed down to an approved concept that is developed into all representative sign types. Different contractors will use different tools to provide mapping information. We believe an online, interactive community map is the best. It provides real-time collaboration allowing the project team to review preliminary sign locations and insert their own icon marked notes onto the map.

Step IV: Documentation

At this point, the various sign types are transformed into scaled elevations, sections and details. These scaled drawings are combined with a material and finish schedule, location plans, and a message schedule. These materials become the community's bid documents and include production-ready artwork.

Step V: Bidding & Production Management

Once your community is ready to begin fabricating and installing the system, your wayfinding consultant should assist with selecting a vendor and monitoring the production process.

The Sign Type Family

Sign Type	Classification	Description
* A1.0.0	Identity	Identification sign for facility or area
* B1.0.0	Banner	Street or promotional banner
C1.0.0	Construction	Construction site informational sign (temporary)
* D1.0.0	Directory/Area Map	Stand alone or wall mounted area map
E1.0.0	Exhibit/Interpretive	Interpretive or informational graphics for public exhibits
F1.0.0	Flag/Pennant	Flags, pennants and support hardware
* G1.0.0	Gateway	Entry identity for county, city, district or area
H1.0.0	Accessible	ADA compliant signage
J1.0.0	Informational	Public Notice / Warning
* K1.0.0	Kiosk/Informational Area	Multiple information structure (may include area map)
L1.0.0	Billboard	Free standing promotional display
M1.0.0	Mural/Public Art	Applied art or graphics to the environment
N1.0.0	Paving Treatment	Applied art or graphics to hardscapes
* O1.0.0	DOT / MOT	Department / Ministry of Transportation
* P1.0.0	Pedestrian Directional	Directional signs for pedestrians
* R1.0.0	Regulatory	Rules, cautionary or prohibitory signs
* T1.0.0	Trailblazer	Walking or driving tour markers
* V1.0.0	Vehicular Directional	Directional signs for vehicular traffic
W1.0.0	Window/Hours of Operation	Applied graphics onto window and doors
Z1.0.0	Garnish/Decorative	Anything decorative that does not convey a message

* Key sign types within a community wayfinding system

K1.VU.1



Key Sign Types

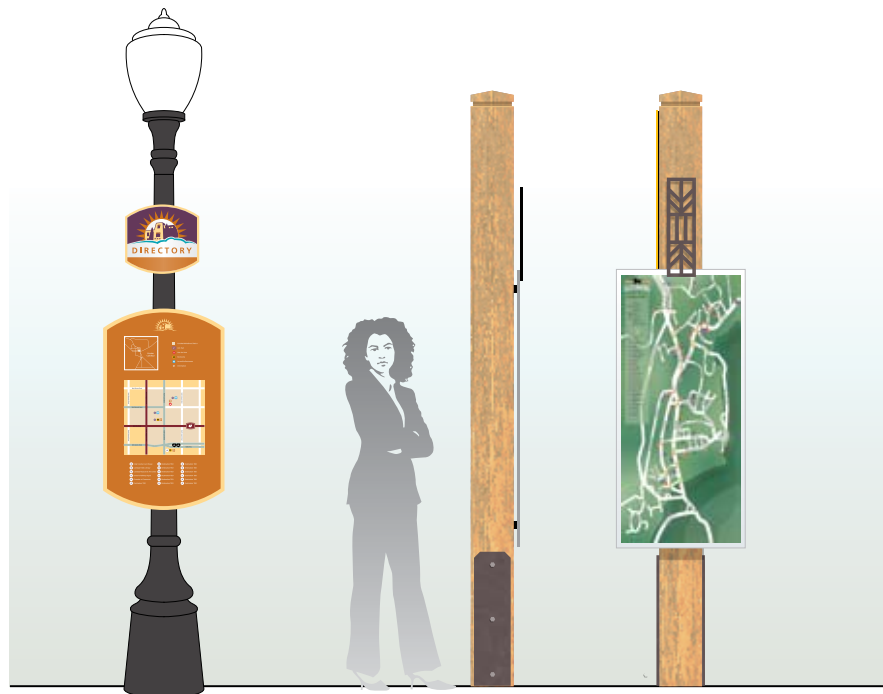


Sign Type A: Identity



Sign Type B: Banners

Key Sign Types



Sign Type D: Directory / Area Map

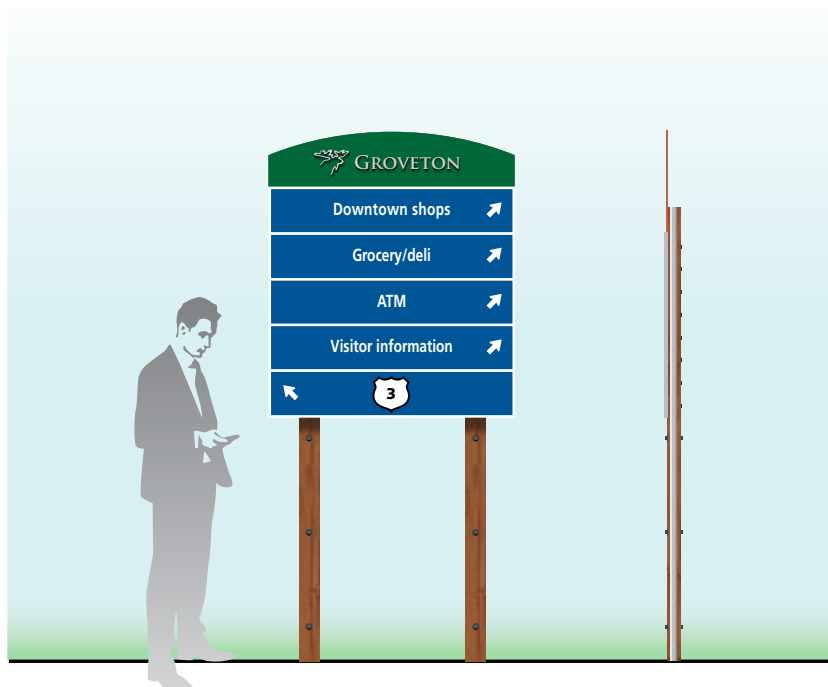


Sign Type G: Gateway

Key Sign Types

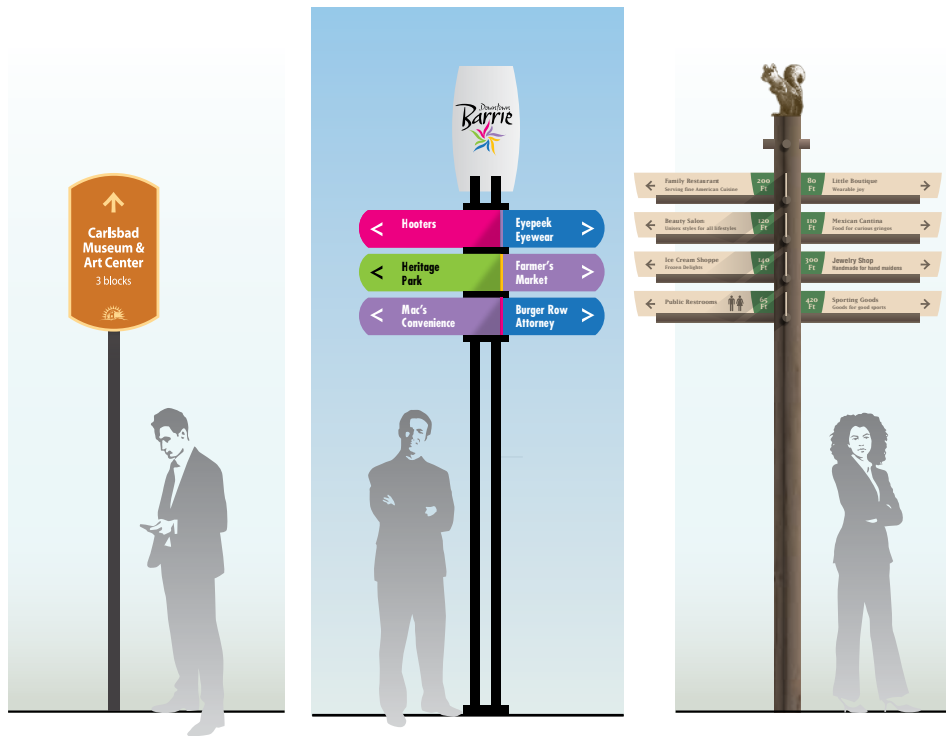


Sign Type K: Kiosk



Sign Type O: T.O.D. / M.O.T. (hwy)

Key Sign Types

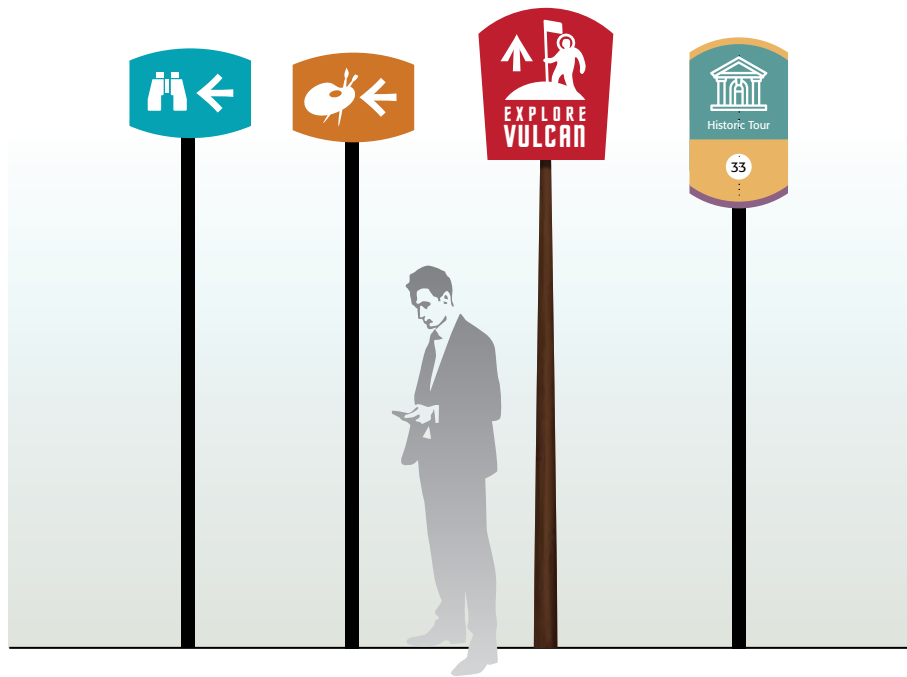


Sign Type P: Pedestrian Directional



Sign Type R: Regulatory

Key Sign Types



Sign Type T: Trailblazers



Sign Type V: Vehicular Directionals

About the Authors

Vicky Soderberg

Vicky brings creativity and dedication to her work – whether she is performing assessments, communicating with clients, facilitating public meetings, juggling on-site logistics or brainstorming solutions. She is deeply committed to enhancing each community's character – its sense of place – in ways that benefit local residents as well as visitors.



As a project manager and consultant, Vicky serves as primary client liaison on a variety of projects aimed at branding, marketing, product development, wayfinding and plan implementation. Involved at all stages, she researches and assesses community assets, challenges, stakeholders and tourism/economic development-related initiatives. She also conducts planning charrettes and a range of resident surveys.

During on-site visits she meets with community leaders, government officials, residents and organizations and throughout the process researches and drafts recommendations, develops alternatives, creates implementation tools, and coordinates deliverables. Some project examples include:

Coos County, New Hampshire

After planning and managing an branding plan implementation charrette, Vicky worked with the Northern Community Investment Corporation (NCIC) to develop a technical assistance program that provided one-on-one assistance to a small group of independent restaurants and retailers who were committed to making changes. She also worked with NCIC and Todd Mayfield on the development of a county-wide wayfinding system that is currently being installed.

Helena, Montana

Vicky facilitated the extensive public input process As part of a branding and product development plan she researched and developed recommendations, identified funding opportunities and performed a wayfinding assessment.

Southlake, Texas

As part of a tourism action plan, Vicky performed a wayfinding assessment with recommendations for a kiosk system and enhancement of the current system.

Vicky's work in the travel and tourism field began more than 20 years ago when she wrote travel reports and city profiles and contracted with trade publications to provide over 2,000 hotel and restaurant reviews for properties across North America and Europe. While completing the reviews, she frequently worked one-on-one with property owners to provide more detailed assessments that included innovative ideas about increasing market share, dealing with staffing and facility challenges, and adapting to industry and economic trends.

Combining her years of hands-on experience with her Master's level education in tourism planning & development enables Vicky to provide innovative, implementable solutions for the challenges faced by communities across North America.

For more information about Cygnet Strategies, visit www.CygnetStrategies.com

Follow Vicky on Twitter: [@CygnetUpdates](http://twitter.com/CygnetUpdates)

Connect with Vicky on LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/vickysoderberg>

About the Authors

Todd Mayfield

Mayfield Creative

Having over 28 years of brand development, wayfinding, advertising and print graphics experience, Todd has earned numerous awards for design excellence and profound respect among his constituents. He is also an accomplished fine artist and illustrator.



Todd developed wayfinding process standards for Destination Development (Seattle), The Douglas Group (Washington DC), Great Destination Strategies, (Seattle), Farrington Design Group (Atlanta), Ambrosi Associates (Chicago) and Media Five LTD (Hawaii).

His work has been featured in national publications and books such as Print, Signs of the Times and American Corporate Identity. He is the principal of Mayfield Creative with a loyal client base from Hawaii to the Caribbean.

His portfolio of city branding and wayfinding clients includes over two dozen municipalities across the US and Canada.

He currently handles all of the visual communications and rebranding for NAGICO, a leading insurance provider in the Caribbean. He provides ongoing brand development and wayfinding programs for Great Destination Strategies, I. D. Entity, Ecos Communications, Destination Development and Cygnet Strategies.

Prior to opening Mayfield Creative, Todd was the Creative Director for Nth Degree in Georgia where he provided design direction for large events and trade shows. While there, he designed audience acquisition campaigns and event graphics for high-profile companies such as Qualcomm, Intel, Kyocera, Hot Jobs, Mohawk and Pfizer.

Previously, he served as the Design Director for the Douglas Group in Washington, DC where he headed branding, wayfinding and interpretive projects for clients such as the US Capitol, the US National Arboretum, the Ronald Reagan Building, Marriott Hotels and Ritz-Carlton.

In Chicago, Todd was a senior designer for Ambrosi & Associates. His projects included in-store and point-of-sale graphics for Sears, Jacobsons, Walgreens and Herbingers. He also provided brand development and wayfinding for two shopping malls owned by General Growth Properties.

In Hawaii, Mr. Mayfield worked for a large international architectural and interior design firm called Media Five, Ltd. He was the lead designer for their graphic design team which specialized in creative services for the hospitality industry. His projects included branding and wayfinding for large hotels and resorts such as the historic Royal Hawaiian Hotel in Waikiki and the Kapalua Beach Hotel in Maui.

To learn more about Mayfield Creative and to view the online portfolio, visit www.mayfieldcreative.com